United Nations S/PRST/2012/7

Security Council

Distr.: General
26 March 2012

Original: English

Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 6741st meeting of the Security Council, held on 26 March 2012, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Peace and security in Africa", the President of the Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council is following closely the security and humanitarian situation in the Sahel region, and has received regular briefings on these issues.

"The Security Council expresses its serious concern about the insecurity and rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Sahel region, which is further complicated by the presence of armed groups and terrorist groups, and their activities, as well as by the proliferation of weapons from within and outside the region, that threaten peace, security and stability of regional states. The Security Council calls for national authorities, and international, regional and sub-regional organizations, to take urgent steps to further their concerted efforts to address these challenges in an effective and appropriate manner.

"The Security Council strongly condemns the forcible seizure of power from the democratically-elected government of Mali by some elements of the Malian armed forces, and in this regard recalls its Press Statement of 22 March 2012. The Security Council condemns the acts initiated and carried out by mutinous troops against the democratically-elected government and demands they cease all violence and return to their barracks. The Security Council calls for the restoration of constitutional order, and the holding of elections as previously scheduled.

"The Security Council condemns the attacks initiated and carried out by rebel groups against Malian Government forces and calls on the rebels to cease all violence and to seek a peaceful solution through appropriate political dialogue.

"The Security Council emphasizes the need to uphold and respect the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Mali.

"The Security Council expresses its concern over the fragile security and humanitarian situation in the region, and notes that it has been exacerbated by drought, food shortages and the return of thousands of returnees following the Libyan crisis and other crises in the region.

Please recycle

"The Security Council was also informed that millions of people in the Sahel region are suffering from that crisis, forcing thousands to migrate to less affected neighbouring countries.

"The Security Council commends the joint efforts made by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and other agencies of the United Nations to provide humanitarian assistance and to draw international attention to the scale of the problem in the Sahel region. The Security Council was informed of the proposal to appoint a Senior Regional Humanitarian Coordinator.

"The Security Council welcomes the Emergency-programmes undertaken by the national authorities of the region as an expression of their primary responsibility. The Security Council also welcomes the initiatives taken by regional and sub-regional organizations such as the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and efforts so far made by bilateral and multilateral partners, to assist the Sahel countries to alleviate the regional food and nutrition crisis. The Security Council encourages the international community to provide support to resolve the crisis in Mali and the Sahel region based on an integrated strategy for immediate and long term needs, encompassing security, development and humanitarian issues."